FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 5, 2004

Contact:
Anne Johnson, Director of Communications, (202) 523-3240, ext. 27

WASHINGTON - The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is hosting an on-the-record briefing about the situation for religious freedom in Pakistan. Mr. Shahbaz Bhatti will make remarks and take questions.

Bhatti founded the Christian Liberation Front of Pakistan (CLF), which led to the formation of the All Pakistan Minority Alliance (APMA), which joins together Christian, Hindu, Sikh, Balmeek, Bheel, Maingwal, Zoroastrian, Baha'i and Kelash communities from all over Pakistan in an effort to secure and protect the economic, social, and political rights of religious minorities.

Bhatti has met on numerous occasions with Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Zafarullah Jamali to discuss the concerns of religious minorities in Pakistan. In his capacities as President of the CLF, Chairman of the APMA, and Executive Director for the Pakistan Council for Human Rights and Democracy, Mr. Bhatti also travels frequently to the United States and Europe in order to make presentations at conferences and other meetings and to participate in sessions of the UN Human Rights Commission.

WHAT: On-the-record briefing: "Religious Extremism and the Situation for Religious Minorities in Pakistan"

WHO: Mr. Shahbaz Bhatti, Lahore, Pakistan

WHEN: Friday, April 9, 2004, 2:00 - 3:30 pm

WHERE: The Offices of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom,

800 North Capitol Street, NW, Suite 790, Washington, DC 20002

** Seating is limited, so please RSVP by calling Shahriar Hafizi at (202) 523-3240, ext. 24 or email communications@uscirf.gov no later than Thursday, April 8th **

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom was created by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 to give independent policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and the Congress.

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